

## Essay 3: Rhetorical Analysis

### Assignment Description

For this assignment, you will write a rhetorical analysis, a thesis-driven essay in which you describe and evaluate a text's rhetorical strategies. The text you will analyze for this assignment will be a TED talk. (You must choose from the options on the 3<sup>rd</sup> page of the assignment sheet.)

In your analysis, you should identify and describe the rhetorical situation (genre, audience, purpose, stance, and context). Specifically, you should pay attention to:

- the speaker's primary argument
- secondary claims that support or extend the primary argument
- types of evidence that the speaker uses to justify his or her claims
- assumptions that the speaker makes about the topic or expects the audience to make about the topic
- the organizational, mechanical, and rhetorical delivery of the argument and evidence.

Because you are analyzing a video recording of the speech, you should also consider the speaker's tone, gestures, and use of visuals.

Note that a successful rhetorical analysis does not offer an independent analysis or argument about the subject matter of a text; instead, it answers the following questions:

- What rhetorical strategies does an author/ a text use to persuade its audience?
- Why?
- To what effect?

*Key Terms: Analysis, Rhetorical Strategies, Rhetorical Context*

### Rhetorical Audience and Context

Your audience for the rhetorical analysis is the organizer of a speaker series at Oklahoma State. Your goal is to describe and evaluate the speech with the goal of providing the organizer with enough evidence to decide whether or not the speaker should be invited to speak at OSU.

### Purpose and Outcomes

The purpose of this assignment is to:

- Break down and analyze the rhetorical moves made in a primary text, and then arrange and assemble those details in an essay explaining their overall purpose/effect for a specialized/academic audience.
- Revise and edit multiple drafts to produce writing that is well organized, mechanically and grammatically sound, and mostly error free
- Provide effective feedback on the writing of their peers, and both reflect upon and incorporate peer and instructor feedback through editing and revision processes

### Overview of the Unit Process

1. We will begin by practicing rhetorical analysis in class.
2. You will then complete the Social Media Analysis handout. This assignment gives you a chance to practice applying the principles of rhetorical analysis to a familiar medium. Note: You do not have to have a social media account to complete this assignment.
3. During the beginning of the unit, you should select a TED talk from the list provided, watch it, and write a summary. In the summary, you should convey the entire argument, not merely part of the argument. Make sure you provide enough detail to present a cogent articulation of the argument. However, you should avoid too many details. You will have to decide what information is necessary for you to present the author's argument, without becoming tedious.
4. You should identify and analyze the rhetorical situation and strategies used. (See above.)
5. You should then evaluate the effectiveness of the argument. Remember, that you are evaluating the construction and delivery of the argument not the subject matter itself.

6. Once you have created a draft, you will conduct a series of revision activities (peer editing, completion of revision memo, and small group conferences) that will help you refine your rhetorical analysis.
7. You will submit the rhetorical analysis on November 5<sup>th</sup>.
8. Finally, once you receive feedback on your rhetorical analysis, you will write a reflection essay.

### Timeline

10/17	Social Media Analysis (Handout on D2L) Due in Class
10/22	Selected Topics and Summaries Due on D2L
10/29	Peer Editing (Hard Copy Due In Class)
10/31 & 11/2	Small Group Conferences (Revision Memo Due at Conference)
11/5	Rhetorical Analysis Due on D2L at 11:59PM
11/19	Rhetorical Analysis Reflection Essay Due on D2L at 11:59PM

### Requirements

- 1200–1800 words
- 12-point Times New Roman, Calibri, or Garamond font
- MLA conventions for margins, page numbering, and title

### Evaluative Criteria and Rubric:

This essay should demonstrate your ability to:

- Analyze a text in the context of its rhetorical situation
- Write a thesis-driven paper, supported by evidence
- Exhibit development through the writing process (drafts, peer review workshops, conference)
- Create clear, well-edited writing that is largely free of proofreading errors and errors of grammar, mechanics, and syntax

The following criteria will be used to evaluate the profile essay:

Criteria	Description	Points Possible
Selecting Details	The author uses relevant details from the TED talk to help support each claim in the paper.	20
Rhetorical Context	The author has shown a strong awareness of how the text's content as well as rhetorical moves beyond the text have influenced the text's message.	20
Focus	The paper's focus is on analyzing and interpreting the text. The summary is minimal and effective. The author does not "argue" with the subject matter of the text.	20
Introduction/ Conclusion	The author has an interesting introduction that draws the reader in and provides necessary information and a strong conclusion which goes beyond simple summarization.	15
Structure	The paper is organized in a clear, logical way. Paragraphs stay focused on singular topics (presented in topic sentences) and transition from one idea to the next throughout the paper.	15
Mechanics	The paper is relatively free of grammar errors and typos.	10

## List of TED Talks

Nov 2016	Lindsay Malloy	<a href="#"><u>Why teens confess to crimes they didn't commit (14:44)</u></a>
Sept 2017	Kristie Overstreet	<a href="#"><u>What doctor's should know about gender identity (14:26)</u></a>
Nov 2017	Ben Cort	<a href="#"><u>What commercialization is doing to cannibas (16:05)</u></a>
Nov 2017	Sydney Chaffee	<a href="#"><u>How teachers can help kids find their political voices (17:00)</u></a>
Nov 2017	Chera Kowalski	<a href="#"><u>The critical role librarians play in the opioid crisis (12:02)</u></a>
Apr 2018	Rebeca Hwang	<a href="#"><u>The power of diversity within yourself (9:45)</u></a>
Apr 2018	Caroline Harper	<a href="#"><u>What if we eliminated one of the world's oldest diseases? (10:13)</u></a>
Apr 2018	Ian Firth	<a href="#"><u>Bridges should be beautiful (14:02)</u></a>
Apr 2018	Essam Daod	<a href="#"><u>How we can bring mental health support to refugees (5:27)</u></a>
Apr 2018	Enric Sala	<a href="#"><u>Let's turn the high seas into the world's largest nature reserve (13:06)</u></a>
Apr 2018	DeAndrea Salvador	<a href="#"><u>How we can make energy more affordable for low-income families (5:32)</u></a>
Apr 2018	Will MacAskill	<a href="#"><u>What are the most important moral problems of our time? (11:55)</u></a>
May 2018	Jessica Pryce	<a href="#"><u>To transform child welfare, take race out of the equation (7:42)</u></a>
July 2018	Andrew Bastawrous	<a href="#"><u>A new way to fund health care for the most vulnerable (11:16)</u></a>
July 2018	Janet Stovall	<a href="#"><u>How to get serious about diversity and inclusion in the workplace (11:05)</u></a>
Aug 2018	Tammy Lally	<a href="#"><u>Let's get honest about our money problems (12:31)</u></a>
Aug 2018	Walter Hood	<a href="#"><u>How urban spaces can preserve history and build community (14:15)</u></a>
Sept 2018	Benedetta Berti	<a href="#"><u>Did the global response to 9/11 make us safer? (7:47)</u></a>
Sept 2018	Tracie Keese	<a href="#"><u>How police and the public can create safer neighborhoods together (9:57)</u></a>